

THE  
MUSICAL WORLD,  
A MAGAZINE OF  
ESSAYS, CRITICAL AND PRACTICAL,

AND WEEKLY RECORD OF

Musical Science, Literature, and Intelligence.

“Ἡ μὲν ἁρμονία ἀδαπτόν τι καὶ ἀσώματον,  
καὶ πάγκαλόν τι καὶ θεῖόν ἐστιν.”

PLAT. *Phædo*, sec. xxxvi.

Music is a something viewless and incorporeal,  
an all-gracious and a God-like thing.

MAR. 26, 1840.

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WHILE our concert-orchestras are maintained at a greater cost than those of any other country—while their content of executive talent is as great here as abroad, and while no mean amount of skill and experience is devoted to their direction, the performance of our bands is notoriously insecure. From the Philharmonic, downwards, all are alike open to the suspicion of uncertainty;—the playing of all is sometimes fine, sometimes directly the reverse, and commonly wavering midway between the extremes. The causes of this very unnecessary discredit to our musical *status*, are to be found, we think, in the strange customs retained in this country in the matter of orchestral discipline; and an old adage which informs us how broth may be spoiled, points, if applied to the performance of a symphony, to one and a very prominent source of failure—the bi-partite administration of the governing power. In every English orchestra we find a leader and conductor; one of which offices is manifestly superfluous, and both, not unfrequently, are as evidently useless: to which, then, of the two, can the supreme generalship be reasonably confided? As far as we understand the matter, the mere beating of time—considered mechanically—is but a fractional part of an orchestral director's duty. He should be a kind of musical step-father: he should appear at the rehearsal of a composition as the representative of its author—not the mere matter-of-fact reciter of his expressions, but the imaginative expounder of his feelings. He should be able to pry into the innermost motives of a score—should study it with an artist's comprehension—should suffer no point of grandeur or beauty, from the outline of its conception to the minutest details of its colouring, to escape his scrutiny—in fact, he should submit it to a process of mental digestion, and thus master, at once, of text and

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meaning, should impart to its performance not only the indispensable feature of accuracy, but all those graces of *appreciation* which alone can complete it as a disclosure of the composer's intention. Now, setting the present race of conductors out of the question, which of our orchestral *leaders* possesses musical feeling, or even knowledge of a score, sufficient to justify his interference with a process such as we have described?—positively not one. Granted, they are all excellent fiddlers, but they are nothing more. To the fiddle they have confined their study, and to the fiddle should they limit their practice. What is our present position? The wisdom of our ancestors has posted one man on a joint-stool to direct an orchestra, if he *can*, and another a little higher up to overturn all his arrangements if he *likes*, and thus bequeathed us an intolerable absurdity. Down goes the conductor's *baton*, ditto the heel of the leader's boot—perhaps simultaneously, perhaps not, as the case may be;—"piano!" vociferates the conductor, "S-s-s-sh!" responds the leader—that is, if he *thinks piano*; he *may*, perhaps, think *forte* and act accordingly, whereupon, as a matter of course, wind and string follow suit. Should the conductor call a halt to discuss some knotty point of style, the leader never concerns himself—why should he? If the matter in hand be some old composition, *of course* he can play his part; if otherwise, he still needs no enlightenment from his fellow-director, and so forthwith betakes him to tuning his fiddle, or some other harmless diversion, thereby telegraphing fidget and inattention to the whole orchestra. And yet this manifest folly—this childish un-reason, is constantly acted in even our best orchestras! A band, like a ship's crew, can only be efficiently controlled by one irresponsible head; but the mere fiddler, whatever the extent of his fiddling, is no more competent to direct the one, than the reefer of sails and hauler of ropes to command the other: the one requires *intellect*—the other solely fingers and their cunning employment. Orchestral performance, we are convinced, will never reach perfection in England until the office of leader—as generally understood—be definitely abolished, and the conductor invested with unshackled authority. If our conductors have musician's heads and composer's hearts—if, in short, they be competent men, great works may then be executed with *invariable* excellence;—if they be otherwise, the public has its remedy.

Another serious cause of failure is the appointment of several conductors to one orchestra. This is scarcely so heinous an extravagance as the other, though not the less productive of mischief. Put the barely supposable case that six conductors possess exactly the same amount of tact and feeling, their *manner*, and consequently their influence with a band, may nevertheless vary in six distinct directions. One man, for instance, assumes a perfectly ligneous rigidity of demeanour—*batonizes* in emulation of those quaint automata that of yore struck hours and quarters on St. Dunstan's bells, and utters his remarks with all the solemnity of a sentence-passing judge: another fairly *pummels* his band into turbulence by his desk-breaking vehemence of gesture, and entices it to quietude by pantomime of the most insinuating adroitness: while a third typifies a *crescendo* by a proportionate corporeal inflation, and, *per contra*, writhes him-

self into an apt illustration of its reverse. One man stops his orchestra at least once in twenty bars with comments and suggestions, while another adjourns his fault-finding *sine die*; and, worse than all, no two are agreed as to rate of time—some measuring their *allegro* by a polar, others by an equatorial pendulum. Each of these methods may possess peculiar advantages, but, unfortunately, a band cannot be expected to profit equally by all. We need but compare the orchestra of the Italian theatre *under one head*, with that of the Philharmonic Concerts *under many*, to prove the error of the system pursued at the latter.

At the Philharmonic, this system, bad as it is, can scarcely be abandoned. It was established, with the Society, with the view to reconciling the ambitious feelings of the then members, and, consequently had, and may still have, the excuse of expediency; but we are not a little surprised to hear that another institution which has, since its foundation, been more sensibly regulated on this point, has fallen off from the true faith, and declared itself in favour of the Philharmonic heresy. The Ancient Concerts, throughout their long existence, have had but three conductors—Joah Bates, Grentorex, and the present William Knyvett—the latter gentleman having filled the office for eight years. What motive may have influenced the noble directors in their desire for change—whether fear lest their future performances should go *as well* as the last York and Birmingham festivals, or some equally cogent reason—we know not; but certain it is that the employment of various conductors for the present season has been decided on, and that Mr. Knyvett has resigned in consequence. It further appears that the vacant office, *alternately* with Mr. Bishop and two or three gentlemen whose names we had not previously heard associated with such duties, has been offered to Sir George Smart, and declined by him, with the allegation that he was, on principle, opposed to the contemplated experiment, and consequently averse to taking part in it; and that if, after eight years' probation, Mr. Knyvett's services were dispensed with, his (Sir George's) professional standing and reputed acquaintance with such matters entitled him, if employed at all, to at least an *equal* measure of confidence. At the express desire of the Duke of Cambridge he consented to conduct the first concert, but has since persisted in declining any interference with the remainder.

Throughout this business, Sir George Smart has evinced that manly straightforwardness of purpose which, by universal admission, has ever characterized his professional conduct. He has not assumed any superiority over untried, and possibly, highly-talented men, but has merely refused to accept any rank short of perfect equality with a professor, on whose competence the public has long since most unequivocally decided. He may not possess (we are convinced he would scorn any such pretension) the genius of a Mozart or Beethoven, but at least it may be said of him, that his urbanity and strict fulfilment of his engagements has won for him the respect and esteem of his orchestral companions, while his native firmness of character and hardly-earned experience enables him to direct the performances on which he may be employed, with unfailing accuracy:—no part of which can be safely affirmed of some of his would-be rivals.

How any matter left to the decision of so many sagacious heads may terminate, it is impossible to conjecture; but, if the directors have any regard for the excellence of their future concerts, they will revert to their old plan. They had far better employ one bad conductor than half-a-dozen of as many different degrees of merit: the latter course would inflict on their band and themselves a most blissless state of trouble and uncertainty, while in adopting the former, they would at least insure to their performances the characteristic of *uniformity*.

### MUSIC IN PARIS.

(From a Correspondent of the Post.)

#### RETURN TO THE STAGE OF THE CELEBRATED MADEMOISELLE FALCON.

One of the most affecting scenes ever witnessed on the stage, was exhibited here lately at the *Académie Royale de Musique*. Falcon, the graceful and majestic Falcon, whose vocal and histrionic flights had been the admiration and delight of European amateurs, visitors in the French capital—Mdlle. Falcon, who some two years ago lost her voice through a cold, re-appeared to afford her admirers the opportunity of judging whether such a brilliant career was to be stopped for ever, whether such a bright gem was to be entirely lost, and if a long convalescence afforded hopes that a sunny sky, fair Italia, where she is to wing her flight, would restore to the musical world one of its brightest ornaments. We were to see whether her creations of the *Jewess*, and *Valentine*, in Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*, were to be lost to us. What a gap did Falcon's retirement leave to be filled up. How many aspirants for vocal fame have essayed and failed. France has been in vain traversed to find her successor. Neither in power or quality of voice, her compass three octaves, and the tone exquisitely rich and true, nor in the attributes of tragic power, has it been possible to replace her. Grandeur, energy, purity of style, certainty of execution, admiration, enunciation, and perfect intonation, did Falcon combine; and yet at the moment when her talents were ripening into maturity, inflammation of the throat removed her from the stage in the midst of triumph. Ye vocalists, in the plenitude of your fame, ponder on this sad example, when you look disdainfully down upon your surrounding worshippers—one hour may destroy the labour of your whole life—one hour will annihilate nature's handiest work. You may not always find so grateful a public as the one assembled at the *Académie*, for royalty, rank and fashion were there to greet the return of the favourite Falcon. The night was devoted to her as a benefit, for she had in the midst of her glory earned golden opinions—she had not forfeited public or private sympathy by her pride, caprice, or pretensions. As there was real genius, so was there true modesty—two qualities not very often combined in artists.

The two first acts of Halevy's *Juive*, the fourth act of Meyerbeer's *Huguenots*, than which act there is no grander music in existence; and we had dancing from Merante and Mdlle. Blangy, Coralli, and Mdlle. Adele Dumelatre; Petipras and Mdlle. Fitzjames, and Madames Noblet and Alexis, besides the entire *corps de ballet*, no lack of attraction consequently. The prices of admission were doubled, and as the tickets had been bought up even at that increase, large sums were paid for admission; the house was in fact filled to the lobbies, with nearly the whole pit converted into stalls. Thus much for the dry routine of the affair, now for the romantic reality.

The introduction preceding the rising of the curtain was heard with impatience. The organ pealed in vain at the scene of the church and town of Constance—all eyes were directed towards a long narrow street looking to the left of the stage. At length were seen at its extremity a small, spare, dwarfish figure of a Jew, on whose arm was hanging a fair form, with luxuriant raven tresses, of commanding figure, and regular and handsome features, *à la Grecque*. Duprez and Mdlle. Falcon were recognized. Such a cheering followed as defies description. The

poor frightened and yet grateful singer was startled. Her bosom swelled at the kindness—she could not weep, and her struggle to master her emotions was in vain—she sank fainting into the arms of Duprez, and was carried off. Fortunately she has only to cross the stage at this period. The opera proceeded, but her nervousness prevented the audience for some time from hearing a note. Eventually her agitation was subdued, and as the act went on, she gradually brought out her voice. It is near the finale that *Rachel* first has the opportunity of showing forth. But what a melancholy desolation was there. The high notes of that noble voice, as clear and as powerful as in her glorious days, the magnificent *contralto* left unhurt, untouched, in the lowest depths deeper still, but the middle portion of the voice, the working, the indispensable medium, gone—entirely gone. Must I go on? I fear irrevocably gone. The hoarseness and peculiarity of these middle tones were most distressing to the ear: it left you in complete agony, it was a musical Tantalus. There poor Falcon was—so much left as to tell us what she had been—Rome in her ruins—her mind majestic still, but the voice vanquished, power prostrated, but passion still pre-eminent, the imagination existing warm and vivid, but the inability to execute manifest and unequivocal. And there she was, unequalled still as an actress rising into sublimity in her histrionic moments, and at times, when she got out of the range of the *Juste-Millieu*, there she was triumphant still, but the pleasure of a moment was too dearly purchased, for it must have been a torture to the singer as well as to the hearer. She must have felt this. Once or twice, when the voice was cracking, she clasped her hands, and appealed with agonizing look to the audience, who were lavish in expressions of encouragement and sympathy.

The whole scene reminded me of our Kean's farewell display at Covent Garden Theatre. It was the last time he ever appeared on the stage, and it was in *Othello*, which he played to his son's *Iago*. Never did Kean's rich undertones appear more exquisite than in his "Farewell" speech. It was like the lurid glare of a flickering lamp as it expires—one stream of brightness and then is over. Poor Kean, when he came to the words, "*Othello's* occupation gone," sunk into the arms of his son, and was removed from the stage never to return. Poor Falcon, is this to be your fate? It is true, flowers, crowns, and wreaths were strewed for you at the end of the evening, but the grave has this homage as well as bridals. If this be your last appearance, you will at least carry with you the grateful remembrance of all amateurs whose good fortune it has been to hear your exquisite organ, and to admire your rare abilities as an actress.

#### ORIGIN OF THE FRENCH OPERA.

THE French Opera is derived from the Venetians, among whom it is held as one of the principal glories of the Carnival. The French Opera was established in Paris, in 1645, by Cardinal Mazarin. In order to render this new kind of entertainment successful, his excellency at the commencement employed Italian performers. The '*Andromede*' of Pierre Corneille, was the first French work which was represented in Paris, in 1650 or 1652. The machinery, of which the French had not at that time any idea, was the production of the *Sieur Sorelli*; and its magnificence was such that it eclipsed that of the Venetian Opera, celebrated for the expense bestowed upon it. In the following years were represented '*La Pastorale*,'—'*Ariane*,'—'*Ercole*,'—'*A Mante*,'—'*La Soison d'Or*,'—and '*Pomona*.' New machinery was invented for '*La Soison d'Or*,' by the *Marquis de Sourdeac*, *Sorelli's* rival.

This opera, which was originally represented in the *Chateau de Neirbourg*, in Normandy, on the occasion of the marriage of Louis XIV. and the peace with Spain, was afterwards performed in Paris. From that epoch *Pierre Percin*, the manager of the Opera, being unable alone to support the expense of such an establishment, entered into partnership with the *Marquis de Sourdeac* and *Cambert*, and a new theatre was built in the Tennis Court, in the *Rue Mazarin*.

In 1672, Lulli having obtained permission to establish a Royal Academy of Music, built a theatre in the Rue de Vaugirard, of which Vigarini was the architect and the machinist; Lulli, therefore, was the first recognised manager of the French Opera. It is to him that France is indebted for that description of entertainment; and he imparted to it the magnificence which so advantageously distinguishes it from all other dramatic representations in France. The poet Quirrault, having united his talents to those of Lulli, from that association sprang the French Opera, properly so called. Before this time it consisted merely of ballets, interspersed with recitative. They added songs, chorusses, dances, gave it a plot, and, in fact, converted it into a lyric drama. At no period, however, has the French Opera been able to maintain itself without the aid of government.

#### AILEEN AROON.

The origin of this beautiful Irish Air, which was first introduced to the British public a few years ago (most unfairly) as a Scotch melody, by the name of "Robin Adair," is thus historically and correctly related:—"Carol More O'Daly (brother to Donogh, a turbulent Connaught chieftain, in the reign of Queen Elizabeth), was one of the most accomplished gentlemen in his time, and particularly excelled in poetry and music. He paid his addresses to Ellen, the daughter of a chieftain named Cavanagh, a lovely and amiable young lady, who returned his affection, but her friends disapproved of the connexion. O'Daly was obliged to leave the country for some time, and they availed themselves of the opportunity which his absence afforded them, of impressing on the mind of Ellen a belief of his falsehood, and of his having gone to be married to another; after some time, they prevailed on her to consent to marry a rival of O'Daly. The day was fixed for the nuptials, but O'Daly returned the evening before. Under the first impression of his feelings, he sought a wild and sequestered spot on the sea-shore, and, inspired by love, composed the song of Aileen Aroon. Disguised as a harper, he, next night, gained access among the crowd that thronged to the wedding. It happened that he was called on by Ellen herself to play. It was then, touching his harp with all the pathetic sensibility which the interesting occasion inspired, he infused his own feelings into the song he had composed, and breathed into his softened strain the very soul of pensive melody. It began "dtiucfs tu no a bhfanna tu Aileen Aroon." "Will you stay or come with me, Ellen my dear?"\* Ellen soon felt its force, and contrived to elope with him that very night.

#### ON THE POWER OF MUSIC.

In all ages music has been cultivated as a liberal science, that constitutes the most delightful employment of the mathematician, and elegant accomplishments of the gentleman. A fine composition operates in the same manner on the natural feelings and imagination, as a beautiful theorem on the judgment. Whether we regard the theory or practice of music, its blandishments are irresistible. Its effects on delicate feelings and particular systems of nerves, are, indeed, very extraordinary. The powerful influence ascribed to its charms by the ancients, would appear altogether marvellous, had not modern experience perceived effects equally wonderful, and modern philosophy pretty clearly explained the causes merely from that analogy observable between the human machine and a musical instrument.

\* Handel declared he would rather have been the author of this air than of all the music he had ever composed. And so enchanted was Signor Tenducci, a distinguished Italian singer, who assisted at the Italian Operas in Dublin with it, that he resolved upon studying the Irish language, and became a perfect master of it.



Diseases have been cured, the passions excited into fury, and allayed into repose, unchastely corrected, and a thousand wonders performed by the power of melody; but, such assertions would seem incredible, were they not confirmed by the testimony of writers of established candour and reputation. Baglivi, and other physicians, have seen that species of madness occasioned by the bite of the tarantula, cured by music, which is indeed specific in this disorder. Saxo Grammaticus Pontanus, Meursius, and a crowd of Danish writers, all agree that Eric, king of Denmark, was so intoxicated with the powerful strains of a certain harper, that, quite frantic, he slew several of his most intimate friends. Dr. South founded his poem, entitled "*Musica incantans*," upon a similar fact, which fell within his own knowledge; and Newenteit mentions an Italian musician, whose mastery over the passions was so extraordinary, that, by varying the measure, he could produce the most desperate frenzy or desponding melancholy. Every one possessed of sensibility has felt the pathos of musical composition.

#### ITALIAN OPERATIC ACTING.

THE splendid histrionic talents of a few of the principal Italian performers may appear somewhat inconsistent with the very degraded state of Italian dramatic composition. But there are instances of great individual genius contending with, and sometimes triumphantly surmounting the difficulties of the Italian stage. The performers do not speak to one another; they sing to the audience; and, if they sing finely, the audience demand nothing more.

Every now and then, there is a long trio, quartet, or quintet; and then the principal personages of the drama draw themselves up in a line along the front of the stage, and execute their piece with all their vocal skill, but with as little regard to their dramatic position, as if they were in the Hanover Square Concert Rooms. And this is not confined to inferior performers; even Grisi, Tamburini, and Lablache are obliged to exhibit in the same way, because the music set down to them generally puts dramatic action out of the question.

It is in insulated scenes and situations that these performers can display their dramatic powers; but it is impossible even for them to render an entire Italian opera of the present day a consistent and rational representation. In the *Puritani*, for instance, Grisi, in one scene, represents the wreck of intellect produced by sudden calamity with a truth and pathos worthy of a Siddons. She is, for the moment, the heart-stricken and desolate bride; but, throughout the rest of the opera, she is merely Signora Grisi, intent upon nothing but the brilliant execution of florid and pretty music, which no genius can ever conjoin with anything approaching to dramatic action. Neither she nor her compeers attempt such an impossibility, being quite satisfied with the plaudits bestowed on their flexible throats and "most sweet voices."

#### REVIEW.

1. *Love's like the Sun.*
2. *Unmoved, I cull the undying flowers.*
3. *Ah! why do we love?* Songs composed by G. A. Macfarren.

In the course of our critical peepings into the shoals of vocal publications which at this time of year swarm around our table, imploring review with the most beseeching expression of title-page, we can but seldom enjoy the luxury of bestowing unqualified approbation. In almost every instance, some unlucky circumstance steps in between us and our kindest intentions; sometimes we find a pleasant tune remorselessly sacrificed by contempt of all harmonical decency—at others we are required to accept strange chords and erudite modulations in lieu of melody of any kind; and, too often, are expected to pass opinion on publications by "composers" whose native innocence has never been sophisticated by any notions of either melody or harmony. With such productions,

however, as these by Mr. Macfarren, our duty is easy and pleasant. His name alone is a sufficient guarantee for well-applied science and perfection of taste in his works, and we eagerly glance over their pages to discover what new assortment of dainties he has provided for us. The first and second of the songs under notice are but trifles certainly, but they are trifles of that kind which only an accomplished musician could produce. No. 1 has a charming melody, playful yet pointedly expressive: it is beautifully accompanied, and, in its construction, presents a novel and effectual method of saving the appearance of repetition between the first and second verses. No. 2 is more quiet and simple, but not the less worthy the musician's notice:—in the second and fourth bars of the second page there are pretty examples of novel effect resulting from uncommon treatment of phrases otherwise in every-day employment. The third, "Ah! why do we love?" is one of the most perfect songs of its class we have ever seen. It sparkles all over with freshness and beauty—from the beginning to the end it would be difficult to point out a bar which does not contain some racy piece of thought, or some unlooked-for turn of expression. We should sin egregiously against our feeling did we not earnestly recommend this charming song and its companions to the attention of our readers.

*Cottage Waltzes for the Pianoforte. Composed by Miss J. M. Andrews. The Queen! the Queen! The Bells of Ostend. Songs composed by the same.*

Publications such as these, afford conclusive proof of the extraordinary mistakes into which amateurs commonly fall with regard to their musical faculties. Miss Andrews has a clear right to divert herself with any affectation of composership which may happen to suit her; but the printing of her lucubrations convicts, either her of the most extravagant confidence in public good-nature, or her friends of gross inattention to her best interests.

*C. M. Von Weber's Works. Edited by J. Moscheles.*

Of this edition, three pieces—the *Grand rondeau brillant* in E flat, the *Polo-naise* in E four sharps, and the *Concert-stück*—now lie before us. They are beautifully printed: the author's time is marked to each movement by Maelzel's metronome; and altogether, the greatest care has been taken to render their appearance and accuracy worthy the music they contain.

*Adeste Fidele. Arranged, with Variations for the Pianoforte, by E. F. Rimbault.*

Variations on "Adeste fidele," forsooth! What next will this age of marvels produce? A Thalbergian fantasia on the 100th Psalm, or a series of contrapuntal exercises on "Nix my dolly!" or what similar recreation for young ladies? Mr. Rimbault's *tema* is inappropriate enough in all conscience; and as to the variations, we know no author, living or dead, of whom they are worthy, except, perhaps, the late Dr. Hook.

*The Summer Rose. Ballad composed by Charles Goodban.*

A passably smooth melody, greatly disfigured by a clumsy accompaniment.

*Farewell! farewell! since we must part. Ballad composed by Frederic William Meymott, Esq.*

A song of extreme brevity, constructed after the fashion of the German *Lied*, and very creditable to Mr. Meymott's musical feeling.

## CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the Musical World.

MY DEAR SIR.—"Arma virumque cano," said or sung Virgil in days of yore, and a right good beginning it was for a poem, entering at once into a plain statement of what he meant to treat of; thereby interesting or discouraging his readers, as the case might



be, *ad initio*. Of managers, music directors, and music sellers, fain would I sing also; but alas! although I have, as a punishment for my sins I suppose, an ear for music, I have an indifferent taste for the figures of poetry. It always appeared to me, blinded individual as I must be, that there was a redundancy of expression in poetry totally unnecessary to the clear exposition of certain sentiments; however, "*chacun à son gout*." I do not cavil at the thing, it is of course my want of taste. But to continue, as I have no ability for jingling rhymes, in shambling prose I shall "a plain unvarnished tale unfold." And, my dear Mr. Editor, as this communication is intended to be strictly private, that is to say, *sub sigillo confessionalis* between you and I, as I am merely relieving my conscience; you will of course understand that I should die with vexation if I thought the thing went beyond the readers of the *Musical World*—in short, I am a very nervous person, and should be for the rest of my days a living illustration of that vocal ornament which readers of the advertising columns of the *Musical World* will find easy of acquirement at the reasonable charge of 3s.—in a word, I would a shake. But to my confession; I have read strictures in various literary productions on the state of the English drama at present, and the misguided people who wrote the aforesaid strictures appear to think that authors, musicians, &c. have been most ill-used individuals at the hands of managers, actors, *et hoc genus omne*. No such thing at all, Mr. Editor. The fact is, our people in the dramatic line, both literary and musical, are not competent to write up to the taste, or perhaps some *saur kraut* will say want of taste, of existing John Bulls, who persuade themselves that they have outmarched that old fashioned "Duke of Yorkish sort of march" of intellect which we were used to in my younger days. But to my confession. Ah! there's the rub; now what man—aye, or woman either, ever made a confession with what, in common parlance, may be called a good grace, but as I am determined to make a clean breast, here goes. I confess, *misericordia me*, to having kept a hobby, and my hobby, as my evil *genius* would have it, was a longing after immortality—very Christian sentiments, quoth the righteous; however, the Godly given would have been "all in the wrong," for as the truth must be spoken in all confessions, I must declare that my project for the attainment of everlasting life was intended to be carried into effect through the medium of my works! don't fancy I would kiss the pope's toe by this expression, for I am as true blue as the King of Hanover's nose, or any other part of his body which may happen to be of that colour on a December morning. My unlucky hobby was writing operas! The tragic, the heroic, the romantic, the comic, and again, the operetta, musical romance, burletta, and musical farce, were all in turn tried by me—successfully! according to my besotted friends, who knew nothing on earth about the matter. There could be no doubt of success—such arias down to G below the lines, and up to C in altissimo. Pshaw! enough to turn the heads of all the *prima donnas* in Europe—such concerted pieces, harmonies, modulations, &c.—Beethoven all fudge! Then only conceive those concerted pieces being sung for near a quarter of an hour in some critical situation where a moment's delay was followed by death, captivity, or something equally terrible—cadenzas, double and treble choruses! drums, trumpets, trombones, triangles and cymbals! in short, all the usual characteristics of what constitute modern operas, grand or otherwise. I must here particularise one duet which every one declared they would not know from Rossini. It became quite obvious that I was a musical genius; I merely lacked an opportunity of presenting my operas, and as a natural consequence myself, before that most unerring and discriminating body the British public. Accordingly I wrote to a friend of mine who was a music publisher of note, or more properly speaking, of notes—requesting, in the most insinuating language I could muster, that he would lend me his aid in producing one of my long-cherished operas. My friend kindly consented, saying, in the most obliging manner, that he would use his best endeavours to have it brought before the public! The thing is *done*, ejaculated your humble servant.

It was impossible to avoid giving way to a few anticipatory visions, such as—opera coming out—stage of Drury Lane—grand rehearsal—snubbing the musical director—directing the leader—frowning fearfully at the orchestra *en masse* when anything went wrong—smiling at, and complimenting, *prima donnas*, &c.—and, again—what a patronising air I could assume to my brother professors—how I would make them feel their littleness *then*, ergo, my greatness. Ah! Mr. Editor, if you only knew how pleasant such reflections are. A month passed—no letter from my friend of notes—another month—no announcement—another and another—I ventured a very polite epistle—no answer—hurry of business, said I mentally—I will go to London and see about it myself, and go I did—my friend all politeness—recollected my opera—dull season—no singers—great risk, &c. &c. "But," said he, "we will see what can be done, I will take you to Mr. Haltinline." Who may he be? thought I; but I had no time for reflection; my friend opened a side door of his warehouse, which led into a handsome apartment, where,



and at the Académie de Musique\* (Opera-House). The leader's desk is placed somewhat diagonally in front of the first violins, which gives him a very good view of the whole orchestra. There is no conductor, or, rather, it may be said, that the leader is the conductor, only with a fiddlestick instead of a baton; for he makes no use of his violin, which he holds downward all the time. It is the same at the Opera, and the advantage seems to be, that he has the means of taking up a point in case of need, which the conductor with a baton is wholly unable to do. The chorus, when required, is placed as the plan shows. I will add the dimensions of a few instruments, as made in Paris:—

Kettle Drums } at the Opera, 24½ and 27½ English inches diameter.  
(Timbales)

Ditto, at the Conservatoire, 25½ and 27½ ditto.

Long Drum } usual size, 21½ inches long, by 30 diameter.  
(Grosse Caisse)

This is a very different proportion to those made in this country, which are much longer.

Triangle } The shape for operatic orchestras is an isosceles triangle, the long  
(Triangle). } sides being 7½ English inches, and the short one 6½. Thickness of the metal, 7-16ths of an inch. The tone is very good, not being a decided note, but an indefinite kind of clang, which is equally suitable to any key.

How different is the present number of double basses from that in use about eighty years ago! M. Fétis† says this instrument was invented in Italy at the commencement of the last century; but in 1757 there was as yet only one in the orchestra of the Paris Opera, and it was only used on a Friday, which was the fashionable day of that theatre.

I think it is now time to close this long dissertation *de omnibus rebus*, &c: however, the scissors are at hand, and you are welcome to make what use you please of the literary labours of your obedient servant and constant subscriber,

London, 20th March, 1840.

V. de P.

## MUSICAL INTELLIGENCE.

### METROPOLITAN.

HER MAJESTY'S THEATRE.—The arrival of Persiani has at length caused a shelving of the wretched *Torquato Tasso*. Still we have nothing new in the operatic way—*Amina* in the *Sonnambula* being Madame Persiani's *cheval de bataille*. She certainly impersonates this character deliciously in all respects, but it nevertheless is the old story over and over again. It is, doubtless, extremely interesting to the opera-goers, but it does not furnish the shadow of a pretext for a single line of remark more than that it never could have been better played, and that we advise all who love fine singing and acting to go and enjoy it. Bellini's *Beatrice di Tenda* is to be produced forthwith, with Madame Persiani as the heroine; and when this takes place, we may, perhaps, be induced to discuss at greater length the performance at this theatre.

MADRIGAL SOCIETY.—The sixth meeting of this Society took place on Thursday last, the 19th inst., at the Freemason's Tavern. The following compositions were performed in the course of the evening:—

Anthem—God is gone up.....	Dr. Croft.
Donna Crude!.....	Ferretti.
Those sweet delightful lips.....	Bateson.
Phillis, go take thy pleasure, &c.....	Weelkes.
Ecco ecco che'l ciel.....	Marenzio.
I will arise.....	Creighton.
Come, shepherds, follow me.....	Bennett.
My nymph the dear, and her my dear I follow.....	Morley.
Hence, stars! too dim of light.....	M. Este.
To shorten winter's sadness.....	Weelkes.
So gracious is thy sweet self.....	Ferretti.
Lady, your words do spite me.....	Wilbye.
Fal la la.....	Saville.

\* Few people here understand that the Académie Royale de Musique is the theatre in which French grand operas and ballets are performed. The dialogue there is all in recitative, no speaking being allowed. When any one in Paris says "the opera," this theatre is meant. The Italian Opera is called le Theatre Italien, or les Italiens, or les Bouffes, and does not include a ballet. At the Opéra Comique (formerly Feydeau) the dialogue is spoken. The establishment that answers to our Royal Academy of Music is called le Conservatoire de Musique.

† In a work entitled "La Musique mise à la portée de tout le monde," a very interesting 12mo volume, that should be read by all amateur performers or listeners.

**SACRED HARMONIC SOCIETY.**—The announcement of Handel's long-neglected *Saul*, for last Friday evening, attracted an immense audience, including a strong muster of professors. From the nature of its construction, we have always deemed this oratorio unfitted for entire performance; and the result of the experiment has justified our anticipations. The huge mass of recitative and air requires much stronger relief than the scanty admixture of chorus has power to impart. Nothing more effectually wearies than a prosy description of the *minutiae* of life, unless heightened by some equivalent for dramatic representation;—*Saul* was, doubtless, a most strange person; *David* slew a Philistine of large dimensions; and *Jonathan* was, perhaps, the most perfect character recorded in the Hebrew scriptures; still, preserving any regard for historical fidelity, nothing can be twisted from these facts sufficient to justify three mortal hours of that peculiar musical see-saw which forms the substance of this work. The true exposition of the matter appears to be, that Handel denied himself his accustomed sources of inspiration. With one exception, he has confined his illustrations to the doings of mere men; and, with *that one* exception, his music is "of earth, earthy." Our readers will guess that we refer to the colloquy between *Saul*, the *Witch of Endor*, and *Samuel*: it is not exactly of equal calibre with many of Handel's extra-mundane conceptions:—we do not recognize, for instance, the spirit of "He sent a thick darkness," or "He rebuked the red-sea, and it was dried up!"—but it stands out, nevertheless, in brilliant contrast to the dullness of the other dialogued portions of the oratorio. The nature of the subject, also, shuts out the mighty aid of choral effect from its usual amount of employment. Save in two instances, "Gird on thy sword," and "Welcome, mighty King," the chorus is used only as an expositor of, or sometimes moralizer on, the progress of the action. With these inevitable draw-backs, the performance went off, as we expected, rather tamely; but the Sacred Harmonic Society is not the less entitled to all sorts of praise for the spirit indicated by the attempt. The amateurs seemed scarcely at ease with their share of the work—not that they once sang incorrectly—but we missed that appearance of enthusiasm for which their style of performance is usually so remarkable. They nevertheless sang charmingly in "Gird on thy sword," "Envy, eldest-born of Hell!" and "O! fatal consequence," (the two finest choruses in the oratorio), and "Mourn, Israel, mourn," in which we encountered that rarest article of British produce, a genuine *piano*. The solos were not, for the most part, extremely well sustained. As a mere display of *tone*, but not otherwise, Miss Birch's singing was commendable. The tasteless approbation of the Exeter-Hall audiences is, we fear, working this young lady dire mischief. She is gradually abandoning all care for articulation and style, for the sake of the silly applause which is invariably bestowed at these concerts on her habit of sliding about, after a most *emetic* fashion, among some of the highest notes of her head-voice. Phillips sang, on the whole, ineffectively, and Miss Lucombe expended a very unnecessary quantity of *screaming* on the music allotted to her. The only irreproachable personations were the *Jonathan* of Mr. Bennett, and the *David* of Miss Hawes;—the former singing with his usual beauty of style, and the latter completely eclipsing all her previous efforts within our recollection. Human throat never gave birth to a voice more lovely than her's—the chalumeau of a clarinet, with a little super-added *warmth* of tone, is its nearest parallel,—and her style, in the music of Handel, at least, is equivalently perfect. Without the least wish to cast a damp on the flattering nature of her reception, we would have her beware lest the purity of her taste be somewhat contaminated by the success of bad example:—she may avoid the danger, by reflecting that many of the good folks who frequent these concerts applaud her and Miss Birch with precisely the same amount of discrimination—Miss Hawes when she sings very *low*, and Miss Birch when she sings very *high*. All the mishaps which occurred in the performance were, as usual, attributable to the conductor's incapacity. They were chiefly confined to the first part of the oratorio, and not strikingly important, except in the chorus, "Welcome, mighty King," which was the occasion of as extraordinary a *mess*, perhaps, as was ever served up to public patience.

## PROVINCIAL.

[This department of the Musical World is compiled and abridged from the provincial press, and from the letters of our country correspondents. The editors of the M. W. are, therefore, not responsible for any matter of opinion it may contain, beyond what their editorial signature is appended to.]

**BOLTON.**—*Harmonic Concerts.*—The last concert for the season took place on Friday evening last, in the Town Hall, Little Bolton, and upon the whole, it gave more satisfaction than any concert we remember to have heard for some time past. The great star of the evening was Madame Stockhausen, who so enchanted her hearers at the great Manchester Festival, in 1828, when she had the disadvantage of singing in company with Madame Catalani, Miss Stephens, Miss Paton (Mrs. Wood), Madame Caradori, Mrs. Knyvett, Miss Love, and Miss Goodall, the best singers ever heard either before or since, and also then in their meridian. In consequence of the great reputation Madame Stockhausen has so justly acquired, she, by particular request, sang, "With verdure clad," from Haydn's *Creation*, with the same angelic sweetness and purity of tone, the same finished taste and charming expression, with which she sang twelve years since, and which is so immeasurably superior to any we ever heard, in the same air. Mdlle. Bildstein, her pupil, reflected much credit upon her accomplished instructress. She sang several airs with much expression, in one of which she was encored. She also took part in some duos and trios, with Madame Stockhausen and Mr. Stretton—who has a light and pleasing baritone, but whose cadenzas are rather too "orid for that species of voice. He sang some songs exceedingly well, with the above-mentioned qualification, and was much applauded. The orchestra was efficiently led by Mr. Seymour, of the Gentlemen's Concerts, Manchester. He played in a duett, for the pianoforte and violin, with considerable taste and brilliancy. The overtures to *Zampa*, and *Fra Diavolo*, went off with much spirit, but the brass instruments were not near so effective as they were in the two preceding concerts, when we had the assistance of the band of the 96th regiment. The players appeared as if they were labouring under the dread of some tyrant. Mr. Hatton is a dashing player on the pianoforte,—but he is too careless. The songs were judiciously accompanied, and upon the whole the concert went off exceedingly well.

## MISCELLANEOUS.

**MUSIC OF PERSIA.**—Al Farabi, a philosopher, who died about the middle of the tenth century, on his return from the pilgrimage of Mecca, introduced himself, though a stranger, at the court of Seifeddoula, sultan of Syria. Musicians were accidentally performing, and he joined them. The prince admired his playing, and wished to hear something of his own. Al Farabi, willing to afford him that gratification, immediately drew a composition from his pockets, and distributing the parts among the band, the first movement threw the prince and his courtiers into violent laughter;—the next melted all into tears; and the last lulled even the performers asleep.

**THE CHOREMUSICON.**—Such is the name of an instrument recently constructed under the direction of Mr. Charles Ollivier, the music publisher, of New Bond Street, at whose establishment it is now exhibited, and Mr. Lewis Moss, the quadrille player, with a view to supply a *desideratum* long felt at quadrille parties—an instrument combining the effects of a small band, so as to be under the command of one performer. Where room is an object it will be found, indeed, truly valuable, being but little larger than a cabinet pianoforte, which in its outward appearance it much resembles. There are two rows of keys—the lower one the ordinary pianoforte, the upper rather smaller in extent, producing effects similar to the flageolet, bassoon, and clarionet. This is accomplished by means of a small set of wooden pipes, in imitation of the flageolet, and Myer's recently patented Æolophon Reed (a great improvement on the ordinary reeds used in Seraphines), these are placed in the upper part of the instrument, enclosed in a box, with Venetian shutters in front, for the purpose of increasing or diminishing the sound; the wind, which of course is necessary, being supplied from a bellows contained in the lower part. There are pedals acting on the lower notes of the upper row of keys, and which, in imitation of the bassoon in

many passages, is highly effective. The whole may be combined on the lower row of keys—this and the different changes being produced by means of pedals which are under the command of the right foot. Added to this variety, we may enumerate, that two of the pedals act upon a triangle and drum. We fear we have but imperfectly described the instrument, yet it will be evident that the effects to be produced by the performer on it are very numerous. On Saturday week it was exhibited at Buckingham Palace before Her Majesty and Prince Albert, and on the following Monday at Cambridge House, when Mr. Moss performed a variety of pieces calculated to its display, in a brilliant and masterly manner.

## TO CORRESPONDENTS.

Mr. Rophino Lacy sends us an explanatory letter, but, unfortunately, at the moment we are going to press. The statements of which he complains were not made until after full inquiry—still they may be erroneous. We will give him an opportunity of speaking for himself in our next number.

Notices of the Philharmonic and Ancient Concerts (having been accidentally omitted) will appear next week.

## LIST OF NEW PUBLICATIONS.

PIANOFORTE.		HARP.	
Chopin.—Op. 33, Sixth of Mazurkas	Wessel & Co.	Chatterton, J. B.—Bridal Chorus Divertimento, introducing God save the King and Rule Britannia	Boosey.
—Op. 34, Three Grands Valses Brillantes	Ditto.		
Pixis.—Souvenir de Tradate, fantasia on Italian Airs	Ditto.		
Mendelssohn.—Overture to Gamacho, as duet	Ditto.		
Lichfield, P. E., Esq.—Six Waltzes	Ever & Co.		
Kalliwoda.—Grand Waltzes, Op. 1 and 2	Ditto.		
—Dances brillantes and modernes, op. 97, No. 1, three Grand Waltzes; No. 2, three Grand Galops	Ditto.		
Bossio.—La Sentinelle perdue; Quadrilles de Contredanses	Boosey.		
Rossini.—Select Airs from La Gazza Ladra, arranged by Diabelli	Ditto.		
FLUTE AND PIANOFORTE.		VOCAL.	
Nicholson.—Fourth Fantasia	T. Prowse.	Masini.—Le Depart des Styriens, melodie a deux voix	Boosey.
—Concertinos, Nos. 1, 2, 3	Ditto.	Long, J.—Hymn on the Epiphany	Z. T. Purday.
Clinton.—Se Romeo	Ditto.	Parker, J.—Launch thy bark, mariner	Ditto.
Saynor.—Air from Elisir d'Amore	Ditto.	Balls, H. T.—Heber's Missionary Hymn—From Greenland's icy mountains	Ditto.
ORGAN.		Westrop, E. J.—Universal Psalmist, part 3	Ditto.
Lincoln, H. J.—Organist's Anthology, book 8	Wessel & Co.	Handel.—O, worship the Lord! anthem for two voices, newly arranged by Dr. Carnaby	Ditto.
VIOLONCELLO AND PIANO.		—O Lord whom we adore, recit. and air from Athalia, newly arranged by Dr. Carnaby	Ditto.
Franchomme.—Solos edited by J. Lidel, Nos. 1 to 8	Wessel & Co.	Cowell, Miss A.—Indian Exile	Chappell.
		Norton, Hon. Mrs.—O take me back to Switzerland	Ditto.
		Lee, A.—The bells, the bells of evening	Ditto.
		Bishop, H. R.—Queen of the sea, from the Fortunate Isles	Ditto.
		—Britain shall that island be, from the Fortunate Isles	Ditto.
		—May, May, merry merry May, trio in the Fortunate Isles	Ditto.

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## PART I.

- |    |  |   |   |   |            |
|----|--|---|---|---|------------|
| 1. | -  | - | - | - | Extempore. |
| 2. | Duetto   | - | - | - | Sarti.     |
| 3. | Overture—"Ariadne"                                 | - | - | - | Handel.    |
| 4. | Air, "Hush, ye pretty warbling choir;" Chorus, "O, | - | - | - | Ditto.     |
|    | the pleasures of the plains"                       | - | - | - | Extempore. |
| 5. | -  | - | - | - | -          |
| 6. | Fugue  | - | - | - | } S. Bach. |
| 7. | Chorus from a Motett                               | - | - | - |            |
| 7. | Overture, "Don Giovanni"                           | - | - | - | Mozart.    |

## PART II.

- |    |  |   |   |   |            |
|----|--|---|---|---|------------|
| 1. | March, "Zauberflöte"                     | - | - | - | Mozart.    |
| 1. | Chorus, "He comes! he comes!"            | - | - | - | Handel.    |
| 2. | Air from "Der Tod Jesu"                  | - | - | - | Grann.     |
| 3. | Chorus "Thy right hand, O Lord"          | - | - | - | Handel.    |
| 4. | -  | - | - | - | Extempore. |
| 5. | Chorus (by desire) "When his loud voice" | - | - | - | Handel.    |

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Rosewood.....	70	..
Handsome ditto.....	75	..
Ornamented.....	80	..

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Ornamented.....	100	..
Rosewood.....	100	..
Handsome ditto.....	105	..
Ornamented.....	110	..

#### GRANDS, Six-and-a-Half Octaves.

Plain Mahogany.....	120	..
Handsome ditto.....	130	..
Ornamented.....	140	..
Rosewood.....	130	..
Handsome.....	140	..
Ornamented.....	150	..

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